

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s): Larry W. White, James Hunter Enis  
Assignee: Dell Products L.P.  
Title: Solution Network Excursion Module  
Serial No.: 10/696,942 Filing Date: October 30, 2003  
Examiner: Peter D. Coughlan Group Art Unit: 2129  
Docket No.: DC-05626 Customer No.: 33438

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Austin, Texas  
June 5, 2008

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents  
Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**SUPPLEMENTAL APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 CFR § 41.37**

Dear Sir:

Applicant submits this supplemental Appeal Brief pursuant to the Notice of Appeal filed in this case on October 16, 2007, the Notice of Panel Decision from Pre-Appeal Brief Review dated November 28, 2007 setting the time for response to December 28, 2007, and the Notifications dated January 14, 2008, April 23, 2008 and May 12, 2008, respectively. The fee for the Appeal Brief was paid electronically via the USPTO EFS. The Board is authorized to deduct any other amounts required for this appeal brief and to credit any amounts overpaid to Deposit Account No. 502264.

**I. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(i)**

The real party in interest is the assignee, Dell Products, L.P. as named in the caption above and as evidenced by the assignment set forth at Reel 014656, Frame 0274.

**II. RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(ii)**

Based on information and belief, there are no appeals or interferences that could directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the decision by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences in the pending appeal.

**III. STATUS OF CLAIMS - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(iii)**

Claims 1 - 24 are pending in the application. Claims 1 - 24 stand rejected. The rejection of claims 1 - 24 is appealed. Appendix "A" contains the full set of pending claims.

**IV. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(iv)**

No amendments after final have been requested or entered.

**V. SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(v)**

In one embodiment, Claim 1 relates to a method for identifying excursions to general solutions provided by a solution network (see e.g., Figure 2 and Page 6, line 24 through Page 7, Line 7) which includes identifying excursions to a general solution on a system basis (see e.g., Page 9, lines 18 – 24), saving the excursions within the solution network on a system basis (see e.g., Page 9, lines 24, 25), when accessing the solution network, searching the solution network to determine whether an excursion solution exists (see e.g., Page 9, lines 26 – 32), and presenting support knowledge to a customer based upon the accessing where the support knowledge includes the excursion solution if the excursion solution exists (see e.g., Page 10, lines 8 – 11).

In another embodiment, Claim 9 relates to an apparatus for identifying excursions to general solutions provided by a solution network (see e.g., Figure 2 and Page 6, line 24 through Page 7, Line 7). The apparatus includes means for identifying excursions to a general solution on a system basis (see e.g., Page 9, lines 18 – 24), means for saving the excursions within the solution network on a system basis (see e.g., Page 9, lines 24, 25), means for searching the solution network to determine whether an excursion solution exists when accessing the solution network (see e.g., Page 9, lines 26 – 32), and means for presenting support knowledge to a customer based upon the accessing where the support knowledge includes the excursion solution if the excursion solution exists (see e.g., Page 10, lines 8 – 11).

In another embodiment, Claim 17 relates to a solution network (see generally Figure 2 and Page 6, line 24 through Page 7, line 7) which includes a knowledge repository (see e.g., Page 6, lines 1-7 and Page 7, lines 12-20), an excursion identifying module (see generally Figure 3 and Page 10, lines 1 – 19), a search module and a presenting module (see e.g., Page 10, lines 8 – 11). The knowledge repository stores information regarding general solutions to issues and information relating to excursions to general solutions (see e.g., Page 10, lines 8-11). The excursions are searchable on a system basis (see e.g., Page 9, lines 18 – 24). The excursion identifying module identifies excursions to the general solutions on a system basis (see e.g., Page 9, lines 24, 25). The search module searches the solution network to determine whether an excursion solution exists when accessing the solution network (see e.g., Page 9, lines 26 – 32). The presenting module presents support knowledge to a customer based upon the accessing where the support knowledge includes the excursion solution if the excursion solution exists (see e.g., Page 10, lines 8 – 11).

**VI.  GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(vi)**

Claims 1, 8, 9, 16, 17 and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ferguson et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 20030130899 (Ferguson). Claims 2-4, 10-12, and 18-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ferguson et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 20030130899 (Ferguson) in view of Collins, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0243998 (Collins). Claims 5-7, 13-15, and 21-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ferguson et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 20030130899 (Ferguson) in view of Markham, U.S. Patent Publication No. 20030158795 (Markham). These rejections are respectfully requested reviewed.

## **VII. ARGUMENT - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(vii)**

The present invention generally relates to a knowledge management system which includes the ability to flag predetermined systems that have a known exception (i.e., an excursion) and render a solution based upon the known excursion.

**Claims 1, 8, 9, 16, 17 and 24 are allowable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Ferguson et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 20030130899 (Ferguson); Claims 2-4, 10-12, and 18-20 are allowable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Ferguson et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 20030130899 (Ferguson) in view of Collins, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0243998 (Collins); and Claims 5-7, 13-15, and 21-23 are allowable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as over Ferguson et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 20030130899 (Ferguson) in view of Markham, U.S. Patent Publication No. 20030158795 (Markham)**

Ferguson discloses a system for historical database training of non-linear models. The non-linear model is trained with training sets of electronic commerce data. The system detects availability of new training data, and constructs a training set from the corresponding input data. Over time, many training sets are presented to the non-linear model. The training sets are presented each time a new training set is constructed.

The Examiner cites to the following portion of Ferguson to support the contention that Ferguson discloses storing excursions on a system model basis:

The neural network may be trained using back propagation with historical data or any of several other neural network training methods, as would be familiar to one skilled in the art. The above-mentioned information, including results of previous transactions of the user responding to previous inducements, which may be collected during the e-commerce transaction, may be used to update the predictive model(s). The predictive model may be updated either in a batch mode, such as once per day or once per week, or in a real-time mode, wherein the model(s) are updated continuously as new information is collected (Ferguson ¶ 0154).

However, nowhere within this portion of Ferguson, or anywhere else within Ferguson, is there any disclosure or suggestion of storing and searching excursions on a system model basis as disclosed and claimed. As set forth within the present application, “system model basis” is a basis where information is stored based upon a system model. Merely stating that a “neural network” as disclosed by Ferguson is equivalent to a system model basis is insufficient to overcome the Examiner’s obligation to establish a *prima facie* case.

More specifically, Ferguson, taken alone or in combination, does not teach or suggest a method for identifying excursions to general solutions provided by a solution network where the method includes identifying excursions to a general solution on *a system model basis*, saving the excursions within the solution network on *a system model basis*, and when accessing the solution network, searching the solution network to determine whether *an excursion solution exists*, and presenting support knowledge to a customer based upon the accessing where the support knowledge includes the excursion solution if the excursion solution exists, all as required by claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable over Ferguson. Claims 2 - 8 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least this reason.

Ferguson, taken alone or in combination, does not teach or suggest an apparatus for identifying excursions to general solutions provided by a solution network where the apparatus includes means for identifying excursions to a general solution on *a system model basis*, means for saving the excursions within the solution network on *a system model basis*, means for searching the solution network to determine whether *an excursion solution exists* when accessing the solution network and means for presenting support knowledge to a customer based upon the accessing where the support knowledge includes the excursion solution if the excursion solution exists, all as required by claim 9. Accordingly, claim 9 is allowable over Ferguson. Claims 10 - 16 depend from claim 9 and are allowable for at least this reason.

Ferguson, taken alone or in combination, does not teach or suggest a solution network which includes, a knowledge repository, a presenting module, and an excursion identifying module where the knowledge repository stores information regarding general solutions relating to issues and information relating to *excursions to general solutions* and the excursions are searchable on *a system model basis*, where the excursion identifying module identifies excursions to the general solutions on *a system basis* and the search module searches the solution network to determine whether *an excursion solution exists* when accessing the solution network, and where the presenting module presents support knowledge to a customer based upon the accessing where the support knowledge includes the excursion solution if the excursion solution exists, all as required by claim 17. Accordingly, claim 17 is allowable over Ferguson. Claims 18 - 24 depend from claim 17 and are allowable for at least this reason.

**VIII. CLAIMS APPENDIX - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(viii)**

A copy of the pending claims involved in the appeal is attached as Appendix A.

**IX. EVIDENCE APPENDIX - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(ix)**

None

**X. RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(x)**

There are no related proceedings.

**XI. CONCLUSION**

For the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of pending Claims 1 - 24 is unfounded, and requests that the rejection of claims 1 - 24 be reversed.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being electronically submitted to the COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS via EFS on June 5, 2008.

*/Stephen A. Terrile/*

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Respectfully submitted,

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**CLAIMS APPENDIX "A" - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(viii)**

1. A method for identifying excursions to general solutions provided by a solution network comprising:

identifying excursions to a general solution on a system model basis;  
saving the excursions within the solution network on a system model basis;  
when accessing the solution network, searching the solution network to determine  
whether an excursion solution exists; and,  
presenting support knowledge to a customer based upon the accessing, the support  
knowledge including the excursion solution when the excursion solution exists.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

storing the excursion exception within the solution network based upon a unique system  
identifier.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein:

the unique system identifier is a service tag.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

storing the excursion exception within the solution network based upon a part identifier.

5. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

storing the excursion exception within the solution network based upon a system model  
identifier.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

storing the excursion exception within the solution network based upon a system  
manufacture date.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
searching the solution network for general solutions when no excursion solution exists,  
the searching the solution network to determine whether an excursion solution  
exists being performed before searching to solution network for general solutions.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein:  
the system includes an information handling system.

9. An apparatus for identifying excursions to general solutions provided by a  
solution network comprising:  
means for identifying excursions to a general solution on a system model basis;  
means for saving the excursions within the solution network on a system model basis;  
means for searching the solution network to determine whether an excursion solution  
exists when accessing the solution network; and,  
means for presenting support knowledge to a customer based upon the accessing, the  
support knowledge including the excursion solution when the excursion solution  
exists.

10. The apparatus of claim 9 further comprising:  
means for storing the excursion exception within the solution network based upon a  
unique system identifier..

11. The apparatus of claim 10 wherein:  
the unique system identifier is a service tag.

12. The apparatus of claim 9 further comprising:  
means for storing the excursion exception within the solution network based upon a part  
identifier.

13. The apparatus of claim 9 further comprising:  
means for storing the excursion exception within the solution network based upon a system model identifier.
14. The apparatus of claim 9 further comprising:  
means for storing the excursion exception within the solution network based upon a system manufacture date.
15. The apparatus of claim 9 further comprising:  
means for searching the solution network for general solutions when no excursion solution exists, the searching the solution network to determine whether an excursion solution exists being performed before searching to solution network for general solutions..
16. The apparatus of claim 9 wherein:  
the system includes an information handling system.
17. A solution network comprising:  
a knowledge repository, the knowledge repository storing information regarding general solutions to issues, the knowledge repository storing information relating to excursions to general solutions, the excursions being searchable on a system model basis;  
an excursion identifying module, the excursion identifying module identifying excursions to the general solutions on a system model basis;  
a search module, the search module searching the solution network to determine whether an excursion solution exists when accessing the solution network; and,  
a presenting module, the presenting module presenting support knowledge to a customer based upon the accessing, the support knowledge including the excursion solution when the excursion solution exists.

18. The solution network of claim 17 wherein:  
the excursions are identifiable based upon a unique system identifier..
19. The solution network of claim 18 wherein:  
the unique system identifier is a service tag.
20. The solution network of claim 17 wherein:  
the excursions are identifiable based upon a part identifier.
21. The solution network of claim 17 wherein:  
the excursions are identifiable based upon a system identifier.
22. The solution network of claim 17 wherein:  
the excursions are identifiable based upon a system manufacture date.
23. The solution network of claim 17 further comprising:  
a general search module, the general search module searching the solution network for  
general solutions when no excursion solution exists, the searching the solution  
network to determine whether an excursion solution exists being performed  
before searching to solution network for general solutions..
24. The solution network of claim 17 wherein:  
the system includes an information handling system.

**EVIDENCE APPENDIX - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(ix)**

None

**RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX - 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(x)**

There are no related proceedings.